

THE
FAMILY PARTY;
A
COMIC PIECE,
IN TWO ACTS,

AS ACTED AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

Vivimus ambitijsâ
Paupertate. Juv. Sat: 3.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED FOR MESSRS. P. WOGAN, P. BYRNE,
J. MOORE, J. JONES, GRUEBER
AND M'ALLISTER, AND
W. JONES.

—•—•—•—•—•—
M,DCC,LXXXIX.

X



1607/3754.

P R O L O G U E

BY THE AUTHOR.

Spoken by Mr. J. BANNISTER.

STRANGE there's such magic virtue in
a name,
Which deals out censure, or dispenses fame !
And that a *taking* title tends to raise
Dress--Snuff--Quack Med'cines--Pamphlets
—Peers and Plays !
Brick-dust call'd—Dentifrice, will current
pass ;
And mutton-suet for—*Pomade de Grasse* !
Some cry, “ Corruption undermines a Na-
tion,”
Start at a *bribe*, but touch a—*compensation*.
Poor Lady Muzzy can't a dram endure ;
Quite faints at *brandy*, but can sip—*Liqueur*.
Thus, a mere name can gild a nauseous pill,
Enslave our Reason, and direct our Will !
Since wide extends this empire of caprice,
Our Author, surely, has miscall'd his Piece !
A “ The

P R O L O G U E.

“ The FAMILY PARTY !” cries Sir Squan-
 “ der Dash,

“ Oh, ’tis some wretched matrimonial hash,
 “ Where two poor Devils whine and mope
 “ together,

“ Loll—pick their teeth—look glum—and
 “ blame the weather.”

As Lady Listless with her sposo sits,
 Stares full at nothing—nods, and starts by fits:
 While her *gay* Lord reclin’d on sofa, lies !
 Twirls round his watch-key—yawns and rubs
 his eyes.

Descending from the Great—suppose we pop
 Into the snug back-parlour thro’ the shop,
 Where a faint twilight o’er the dingy room,
 Peeps from the dirty pane’s congenial gloom ;
 Old Grub, with warm plaid gown and velvet
 cap,

With *Degree* takes his after-dinner nap :
 Who joins in unison the *social* doze,
 And snores responsive to his vocal nose !
 In bounces Miss from school—slap goes the
 door—

Shook from the peg and rumpled on the floor,
 Down drops Papa’s best wig—so spruce, so
 neat !

Fresh oil’d and powder’d for—churchwarden’s
 seat !

Papa growls, but Mamma attends all glee,
 While Miss to crack’d guittar, squalls “ Chere
 “ amie.”

Pleas’d,



P R O L O G U E.

Pleas'd, cries Mamma, "What think ye, if
" to-day

" We take our Betsy with us to the Play ?

" The bill of fare bespeaks a welcome hearty,

" Snug too, and sociable—The FAMILY
" PARTY."

" The FAMILY PARTY ! hold your tongue,"
says he,

" The very name, egad's, enough for me !

" I'm for what's new—no need abroad to
" roam

" For that dull Farce we've play'd so long at
" home."

Thus, all say, Dullness, with her leaden
seal,

Marks for her own, each Party *en famille* :

But if sage Critics condescend to share

A Poet's treat, none thinks of *sumptuous*
fare ;

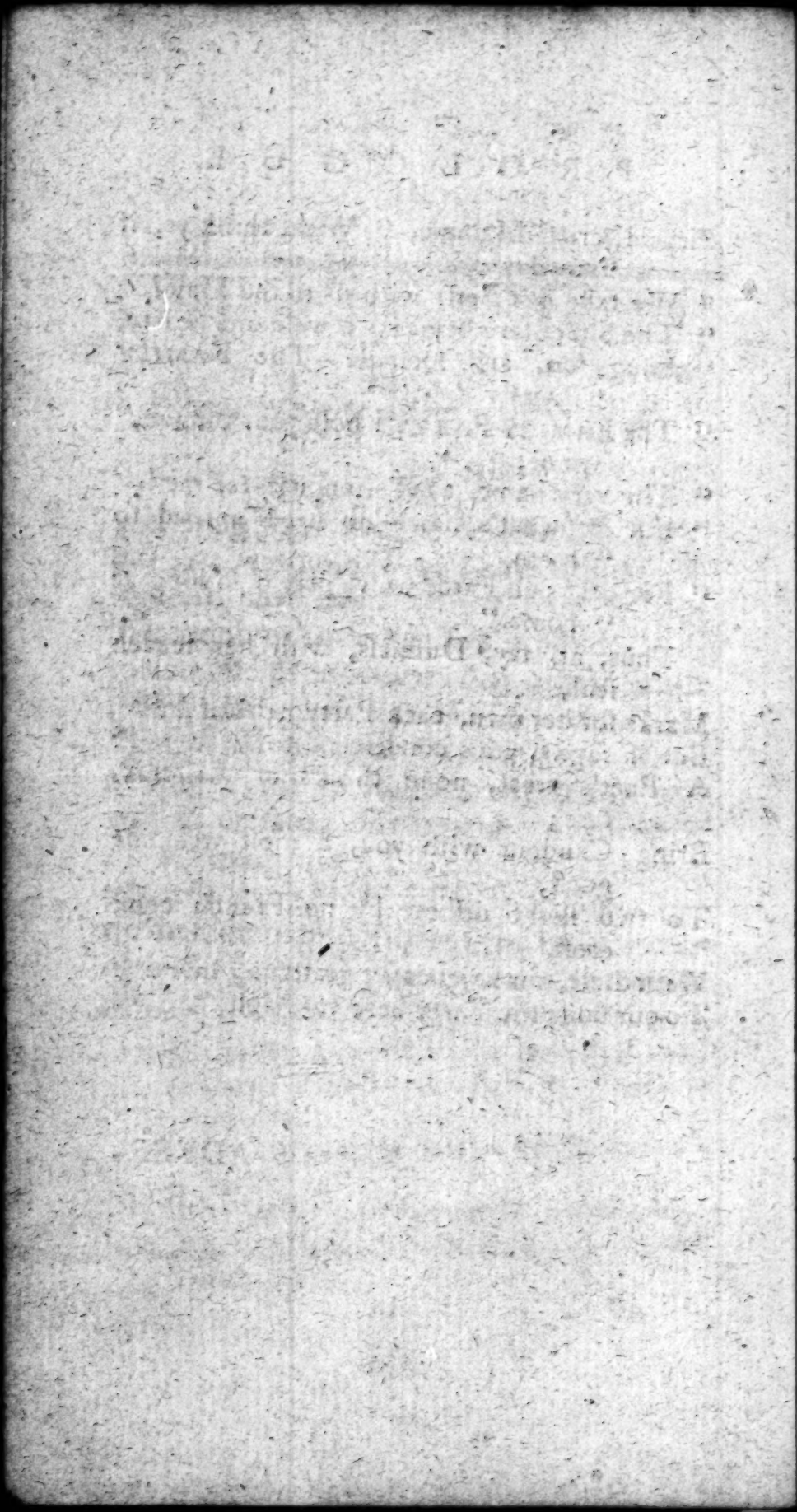
Bring Candour with you, a most welcome
guest,

To two slight dishes, by no French cook
drest !

With those, our Friends we gratefully invite

To our domestic Party here to-Night.

ADVER-

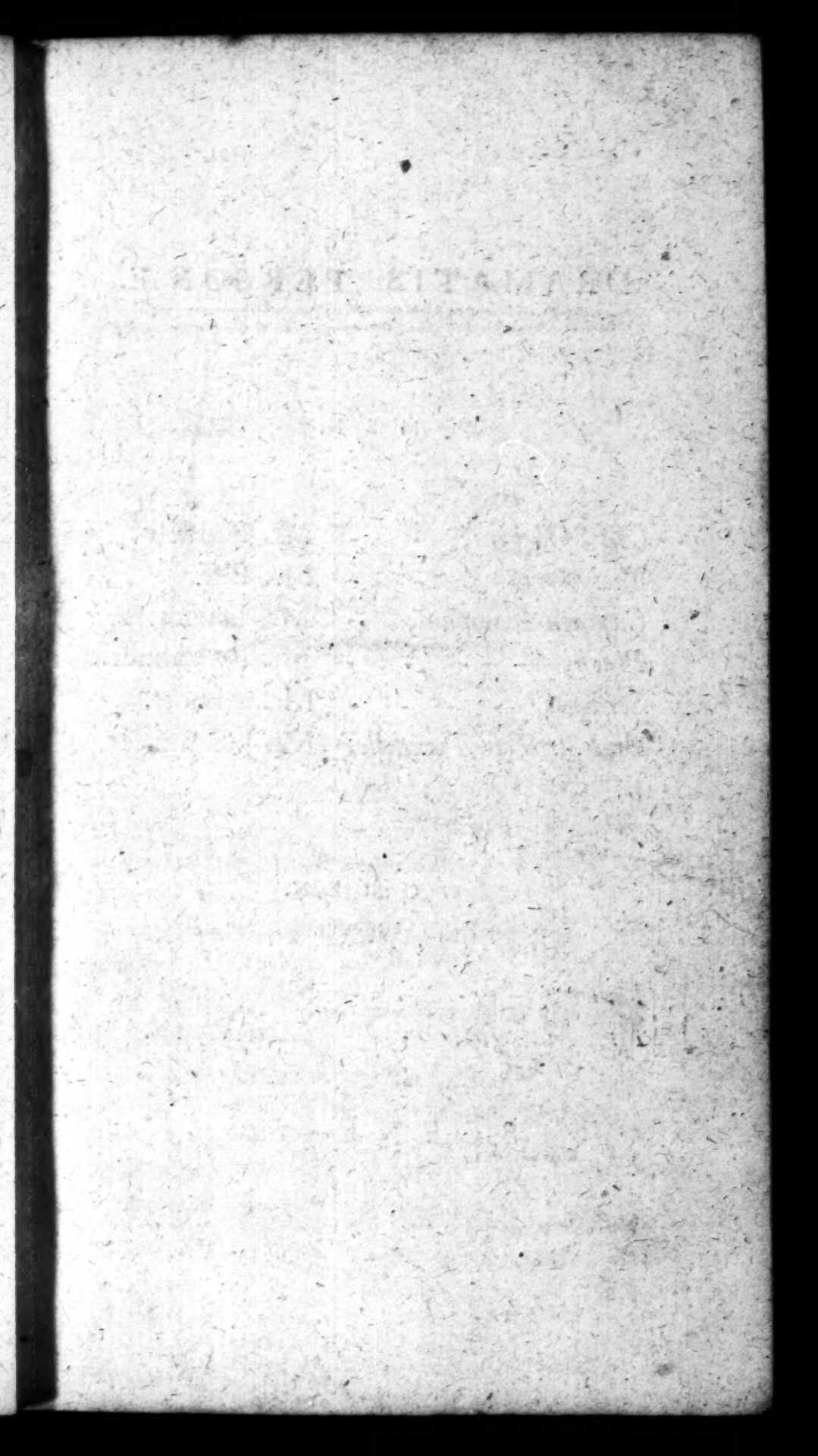


ADVERTISEMENT.

PREFACES have been generally considered as Prologues to the Reader; and various have been the methods made use of in them, to deprecate the censure, and conciliate the favour of the Public. These have been long since, as Chaucer says, “*bolted to the bran;*” nor would the Author of this dramatic trifle have adopted the practice on the present occasion, did it not give him an opportunity of acknowledging, that the very flattering reception it obtained on the Stage, was greatly to be ascribed to the inimitable performance of Mr. J. BANNISTER.

D R A.

[illegible]



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

<i>Old Spriggins,</i>	-	-	Mr. Baddely.
<i>Jack Spriggins,</i>	-	-	Mr. Iliff.
<i>Captain Rampart,</i>	-	-	Mr. Davies.
<i>Pinch,</i>	-	-	Mr. R. Palmer.
<i>Servant,</i>	-	-	Mr. Abbott.
<i>And Sir Toby Twaddle.</i>			Mr. J. Bannister.

W O M E N.

<i>Laura,</i>	-	-	Miss Heard.
<i>Mrs. Malmsey,</i>	-	-	Mrs. Webb.

S C E N E — *Bath.*

THE
FAMILY PARTY.

ACT I.

HOTEL at BATH.

Young Spriggins (reading.)

“YE Gods! annihilate but time and
space

“ And make two lovers happy.”

(Throws down the book.)

“ A pretty reasonable request for two
lovers.”

Egad! not so unreasonable neither
—for a man may travel in England as

B

fast

2 THE FAMILY PARTY.

fast as a balloon, if he will but fill the post-boy with the inflammable gas of the brandy bottle, and readily empty his pocket of his BALLAST.

Enter Captain Rampart.

Capt. Rampart. Ha! if I can believe my eyes—my old Eton friend, Jack Spriggins!

Young Spriggins. My friend Rampart! to see you at Bath is fortunate indeed! But why need you doubt the evidence of your eye-sight?

Rampart. Why, as some of my senses have deceived me, I didn't know whether the rest might not be equally fallible; I THOUGHT I saw you alight at the Hotel, but was informed that there was no stranger just arrived but a Mr. Belmont.

Y. Sprig. O, I can explain this seeming inconsistency!

Rampart. What, you are just come from Cambridge to stay out a thirty-pound

THE FAMILY PARTY.

3

pound quarterage, and have taken Belmont for a travelling name——being more genteel than that of Jack Spriggins?

Y. Sprig. No, no, I was going to tell—

Rampart. Or is it that your modesty shrinks from too much popularity, and you're afraid of being tapped on the shoulder by a FRIEND, whose acquaintance you mayn't so easily SHAKE OFF?

Y. Sprig. No, faith, 'twas neither pride nor roguery, though, I grant you, they BOTH sometimes assist the creation of new titles.—You recollect my attachment to my cousin Laura?—My father now urges me to marry the old Widow Wheezy, and so sent me to Cambridge to break off my former connection.

Rampart. Well, but what brings you to Bath?

Y. Sprig. The sight of my Laura's name in the news-papers among the ARRIVALS. So I instantly followed her, called myself Belmont, lest my father (who is snug at his shop in the country) might see my name in the pa-

4 THE FAMILY PARTY.

pers too, and, by joining us, make it rather too much of a FAMILY PARTY.

Rampart. And, I suppose, she is sent here to lose the idea of your sweet person—and while you are describing the circles of a ball room, your father thinks you are describing the circles of Euclid.

Y. Sprig. Even so!

Rampart. Why it is but TRANSFERRING the seat of science—making the calculations of algebra at a whist table—Studying astronomy, through an opera-glass,—and hydrostatics, at the Pump Room.

Y. Sprig. Ha, ha, ha! You have not forgot the phrase of a soph yet.

Rampart. Forgot! Why, I was a whole year at Cambridge, except that part of it that I was RUSTICATED, and so took lodgings in Covent Garden, and attended too, all the philosophical lectures—at Newmarket!—But what is your present plan of operations?

Y. Sprig. THAT I leave to an abler engineer than myself; no less a man than Pinch, our College hair-dresser, whom I have brought here with me as a temporary valet. He has been in so many

THE FAMILY PARTY.

5

many different situations of life, that he can assume any form with the greatest facility.

Rampart. But what made him give up his College business to follow

Y. Sprig. Why you must know, the only school that Pinch is attached to, is the EPICUREAN; and a late Edict, forbidding good eating, went against both his philosophy and his stomach.

Rampart. Indeed!

Y. Sprig. Yes, he fell a martyr to his principles, and was turned out for smuggling into College a dinner in disguise.

Rampart. A dinner in disguise!

Y. Sprig. Ay, a pig in a portmantau; a goose in a gown, and a calf's head under a tutor's wig!

Rampart. Well, these are talents that need not be idle in this region of intrigue.

Y. Sprig. But you shall judge—I expect him every instant; I have sent him to reconnoitre. He knows the Lady, by having dressed the family at our country races—But I hear him—I'm all impatience.

6 THE FAMILY PARTY.

(Enter Pinch.)

Well, have you seen the dear CHARMER?

Pinch. O yes, I have seen the dear CHARMER. (drily.)

Y. Sprig. But may I hope for an interview? (with impatience.)

Pinch (drily). Whenever you please.

Y. Sprig. This is an unexpected happiness! But will there be no obstacle to our meeting?

Pinch. None at all, unless you prevent it yourself.

Y. Sprig. Nay, then—I'll fly—

(going.)

Pinch. Lord, you need not be in such violent haste, the person would willingly come to you.

Y. Sprig. The PERSON! Pshaw, you need not be so cautiously secret—This gentleman's an old friend.

Pinch. Aye, and so is the person I have just seen! Your Father!

Y. Sprig. My Father! Nay, then all's ruined! I thought nothing on earth could ever have dragged him from his counter.

Pinch.

THE FAMILY PARTY.

7

Pinch. Yes, the mail coach, together with your aunt, Mrs. Malmsey, and the shop porter for a foot-man.

Rampart. Why, faith, Jack, here's an enemy in your own quarters.

Y. Sprig. Unfortunate, indeed! But prithee, dear Charles, devise something for me, the finesse of gallantry is quite your FORTE.

Rampart. Oh, you do me honour—but were I a little more acquainted with Mr. Pinch's talents, I could better think in what channel to employ them.

Y. Sprig. Oh! he'll be sufficiently communicative.

Rampart. Well, but before you commence hostilities, publish your manifesto. Get a letter written this instant, while we plan the delivery.

[Exit Young Spriggins.]

Pinch. Let me see—I have been thinking—Suppose I was to endeavour to carry the letter by introducing myself in my own trade—a lady's hair-dresser?

Rampart. Bravo! that's a hit above your profession.

Pinch.

8 THE FAMILY PARTY.

Pinch. Oh, Sir, I have belonged to so many trades, that were I to honour the City with taking my Freedom, there would be a contest which Company should present with a gold box.

Rampart. Really!

Pinch. Oh, yes; my father thought two trades as necessary as two hands; for he himself was a bookseller and a hatter!

Rampart. What connection could there—

Pinch. A very clear one—for many of his customers had no head for a book, but they all had a head for a hat.

Rampart. That indeed—

Pinch. So my father would fain have bred me both an apothecary and undertaker, that I might have played into my own hands—but my mother thought there was a trick in THOSE trades, and so would have me—an attorney.

Rampart. Conscientiously circum-spect indeed!

Pinch. Yes; but I was soon tired of the drudgery of the desk, got more creditors than clients, was clapt
into

THE FAMILY-PARTY. 9

into jail, and instead of following the law—the law follow'd me.

Rampart. No uncommon case.

Pinch. I then went into the physical line; for I had got a smattering of farriery, and produc'd a universal medicine; but after having spent all my time in writing letters of gratitude to myself, and my money, in procuring their insertion in the papers—my medicine would not take.

Rampart. How so?

Pinch. Because no one would take my medicine. I then tried ANIMAL MAGNETISM, but that loadstone wou'd draw no money.

Rampart. No, because its power was not push'd by French impudence; and we had rather be cheated by any one than by our own countrymen—But you were unlucky indeed!

Pinch. Not much of that—for I then became Manager of the wooden comedy, and interpreter to the waxwork-court of King Solomon!

Re-

10 THE FAMILY PARTY.

Re-enter Young Spriggins.

Y. Sprig. Well, here's the letter if you can contrive to deliver it, Pinch.

Pinch. That I'll do, tho' I should be obliged to paper her hair with it. "Miss Laura Stanley." (*reads*) Yes, yes, we Gentlemen of the comb are privileg'd persons, and 'twill have a sure passport under a tete and toupee irons.

[*Exit Pinch.*

T. Spriggins. I wish he may not be too sanguine, Rampart.

Rampart. But did'nt he say, Laura Stanley? Why faith, if I mistake not, she was one of our cotillion set last night in the rooms, and, egad, if I am right in the *Lady*, I am equally so in another circumstance—I can inform you of a rival.

Y. Sprig. A rival!

Rampart. A most formidable one—a billiard acquaintance, whom I expect
to

to call on me at the Hotel here——No less a man than Sir Toby Twaddle!

T. Sprig. Oh, I have heard of his name, he was knighted when he was partner with Alderman Gibley, the great poulterer, in Bear-binder Lane.

Rampart. The same, and a most laughable specimen of ridiculous poverty; you'd enjoy——

T. Sprig. Pardon me, heaven forbid I should ever be capable of adding insult to the agony of distress.

Rampart. And I think it equally unmanly, “to bang misfortune out to public scorn,” ’tis a hackney’d, but true observation, that we are not ridiculous for what we ARE, for but what we AFFECT to be.

T. Sprig. Well, I allow——

Rampart. This, then, is the exact character of Sir Toby, he has a decent annuity, and sacrifices the comforts of life, to ape the superfluities; and will dine on two penn’orth of beef a-la mode, at noon, that he may figure away in the side boxes at night.

T. Sprig. That indeed!

Rampart. His dress is the very epitome of his manners, shabbily genteel.
He

12 THE FAMILY PARTY.

He wears point ruffles, and a black stock, to hide dirty linen—his stockings WERE WHITE SILK, till eternal washing gave them the YELLOW JAUNDICE, and by the constant oeconomy of *coaxing*, half of them has gradually sunk beneath the HORIZON of his shoe—His cloaths—

(Twaddle speaks within.)

But hark! I hear him without.

Sir Toby (speaking). If the Duke should call, beg he'll not think it necessary to wait.

Enter Sir Toby.

Rampart, your servant.

Rampart. Sir Toby, your most obedient—I beg leave to introduce you to my friend Belmont—you're come to take your revenge at billiards.

Sir

THE FAMILY PARTY. 13

Sir Toby. Oh, positively no, I am so excessively nervous this morning, quite derangé—I drank too much champagne last night in the Crescent, with that comical old invalid, Lord Lazarus, Doctor Drench, his physician, and Count Quiz; my Lord would take no denial, tho' in general I have left off suppers.

T. Sprig. Faith, I believe it. *(Aside.)*

Sir Toby. The Duke you must know has recommended matrimony to his Lordship, as an alterative, and he wish'd me to forward the prescription, for, says he, Toby (slapping me on the back, at the hazard of dislocating one of his emaciated fingers,) we all know, my dear Knight, what effect your figure has with the Ladies.

Rampart. Nay, nay, the elegance of your address is not quite so DISINTERESTED. Come, come, I know you are negociating for YOURSELF.

Sir Toby. Why, indeed, I believe I MUST marry, if it is only to put an end to the rivalry of the Ladies.

T. Sprig. Very considerate, indeed, Sir Toby.

C

Rampart.

Rampart. Nay, Sir Toby, I'm told it's no secret, that Laura Stanley is the happy fair.

T. Sprig. Well, positively now, there can nothing be done among us people of fashion, but half an hour carries it from the pump room to the parade.

Rampart. Why, I know the Lady's aunt, Mrs. Malmsey, is determined she shall marry a man of fashion.

Sir Toby. Yes, in THAT she is something of a more rational being than the rest of the family, or I should have cut the connection long ago.

T. Sprig. Oh! *(Half aside.)*

Rampart. *(Aside to Sprig.)* Now, Jack, for your family portraits——
but the old gentleman——*(To Sir Toby.)*

Sir Toby. A muckworm——reads no book, but a book of accounts, and thinks the greatest effort of human genius, is the multiplication table.

T. Sprig. So! *(Aside.)*

Rampart. I understood you had a rival in Mr. Spriggins' son.

Sir

THE FAMILY PARTY. 15

Sir Toby. Oh, Lord, no, a poor country cub——but I believe a word from me to Sir Peter Palaver, will make him an exciseman.

T. Sprig. S'death, this is too much!

Rampart. Well, but Sir Toby, you'll dine with us here.

Sir Toby. I'm immensely chagrind, but it's impossible——I am absolutely engag'd to the Duke, and have just answered his card.

T. Sprig. Nay, but Sir Toby.

Sir Toby. And from thence to a petit souper, and brilliant conversation, at Sir Voluble Vacant's, with Lady Rachael Rubbish——Doctor Dosey, and Mrs. Snorum.

Rampart. Why, that's unlucky then——Jack, you'll get off too cheaply.

(*Winking to Young Spriggins.*)

I have just won a wager, of a rump and a dozen, of Belmont, and wanted some friends to dine at his expence.

Sir Toby. Hey! what! rump and dozen, Belmont? I hate to spoil a party

——— I'll make my apology to the Duke.

Y. Sprig. Oh, by no means—you are pre-engaged.

Sir Toby. Nay, but I will.

Rampart. And have just answered the Duke's card.

Sir Toby. Why for once——

Y. Spring. And the conversation——

Sir Toby. No, no, my absence would only throw a gloom on the hilarity of the meeting—and, Rampart, do let us have that hunting pudding I met with when I din'd last at your mess; faith I shall beg the receipt for it.

Rampart. Faith, you should give me a receipt for it, for I remember you nearly eat it all.

Sir Toby. Well, well, ha! ha!—I'll go this instant to the Duke—he is a good natur'd soul, and we people of rank can take liberties with each other.

[*Exeunt Spriggins and Ramp.*]

SCENE.

S C E N E

Old Spriggins's Lodgings.

Discovered—Old Spriggins, Mrs. Malmsey, and Laura, at Breakfast.

Mrs. Malmsey. Nay, nay, Mr. Spriggins, when you come to Bath, you should sink the tradesman in the man of fashion.

O. Sprig. No, no, when tradesmen sink in that way, they generally get over head and ears, till at last they pop up their heads in the Gazette.

Mrs. Malmsey. But still——

O. Sprig. Tradesman and Gentleman, is a mixture that will never wear; it's like one of my silk and
C 3 worsted

worsted stuffs, the one *frays out* the other.

Mrs. Malmsey. There now 'tis again ——— I wish you had been in London for months together, as I have at Sir Thomas Tallowcake's, in Thames-street, you wou'd have known a little more of the beau monde.

O. Sprig. (*with a sneer.*) Sir Thomas!

Mrs. Malmsey. Yes, Brother, and no one more accomplished (*To Laura.*) It was he, my dear, that made a sonnet on Deputy Blubber, treading on my corn at Pewterers Hall!

Laura. Why, indeed, Uncle, in matters of indifference, it is better to comply with the singularities of others, than particularize our own.

Mrs. Malmsey. True, and no one, when he is out of Smithfield, could know my Brother Captain Packwax, of the Train Bands, to be a carcase butcher. ———

O. Sprig. Why, why, I ———

Mrs. Malmsey. And yesterday at dinner, Brother, asking whether beef a-la-daube, was not bubble and squeak ——— calculating how much the John Dory

Dory cost a mouthful—and desiring Lady Fisgig to eat some pigeons, as they would not do to set by.

O. Sprig. What should I have said?

Mrs. Malmsey. You should have said, would'nt your Ladyship do me the honour to take a pigeon, they seem quite to go a begging.

O. Sprig. And so I might, indeed, for they were devilishly poor!

Mrs. Malmsey. And then, I tremble for you at the rooms, after last night's fracas—I am glad Sir Toby was not there—reaching across the table, and almost squeezing Mrs. Drybones' fingers to atoms, in shaking hands with her, because you got the odd trick against four by honours; didn't you set Lady Waddle's head on fire, by knocking the candle against it with your elbow?

O. Sprig. Well, but luckily there was no great danger, as her head and her hair were only OCCASIONAL visitors; for at the first alarm, she popt her bald head from under it in a moment, and left the tete to burn my fingers.

fingers——but, however, I endeavour'd——

Mrs. Malmsey. Yes, you made up matters with a vengeance, by running to her assistance, and in your hurry, clapping on poor Lady Waddle's tete the wrong side before.

O. Sprig. Lord, I have been never used to——

Mrs. Malmsey. And then what's worse, when you were at cards, chinking the money on the table, as if 'twas on your own counter——I HAVE, indeed, broke you of wetting your thumb when you deal.

O. Sprig. For the matter of that, Sharp's the word, sure you wou'd not have me like you, who spend half your jointure here in rouge and raffles.

Mrs. Malmsey. P'shaw, but a man worth forty thousand, should keep up appearances for the sake of his credit.

O. Sprig. Credit! I believe no man can have more credit from Leeds to London——but what's the matter, Laura, you sit mum chance——what, thinking of Jack still? He's snug

at

at Cambridge—Deep in Cicero—
Triltram Shandy, and other writers of
antiquity—But Doctor Humdrum,
his Master, says he'll soon take his de-
gree, and be out of his time, and then
for the widow Wheezy.

Laura. Dear Sir, I have no pre-
tensions.

Mrs. Malmsey. Nay, nay, Mr. Sprig-
gins, Laura is thinking of no such
thing—I expect to day, Sir Toby
Twaddle to see your niece, a man of the
first fashion—dresses—

O. Sprig. Ay, there 'tis now, a
man of fashion is like an ancient philoso-
pher, or a modern pedlar; carries all
he has on his back.

Laura. But, my dear Madam, why
this precipitation?

O. Sprig. True, let's see his bill of
parcels—right, child—you want to
know whether his stock is real pro-
perty or—

Laura. Indeed, Sir, I meant no such
thing.

Mrs. Malmsey. Right, my dear, I
knew you was conformable to me;
but come, we must hurry away, for
Sir Toby will be here before we have
done

done with the hair-dresser——What can make the fellow stay so long after the hour he was order'd——but he'll be here I suppose in a minute——well, we shall see you at the rooms.

[*Exeunt.*]

Old Spriggins, solus.

No, no, I am willing to do the business if I can, I expect the rider of Mr. Dennim, my draper, this week; stay, here's somebody coming up stairs——nothing but interruption, I wish there had been a counting house at the lodgings. Oh here is the hair-dresser I suppose that they wait for! Ay, ay, it must be so. (*seeing him.*) Oh a pretty puppy of a barber!

Enter

Enter Sir Toby.

Your most devoted.

O. Sprig. Hem! your servant, friend!
(*coolly.*)

Sir Toby. I came to wait upon Miss Laura.

O. Sprig. Well, well, so I suppose — she has been expecting you for some time, and was afraid you'd disappoint her.

Sir Toby. O Lord! not for the universe! poor girl, she has it!

[*Aside and looking at himself.*]

O. Sprig. And she is gone in, on purpose to receive you.

Sir Toby. I'll fly this moment, and I flatter myself I shall not be unsuccessful in pleasing the young Lady.

O. Sprig.

O. Sprig. Like enough, like enough!
I dare say not.

Sir Toby. And should I be so fortunate as to obtain your approbation——

O. Sprig. My approbation! Ha! ha! ha! Ay, ay, if you give my niece satisfaction——but young folks know best, I have been no judge of these things, these many years.——

Sir Toby. But you are not so old——but you——

O. Sprig. Why, lack a day, I wore a wig at five and twenty.

Sir Toby. A wig! what then? You are not like Sampson, that your vigour should go with your hair.

O. Sprig. Besides the mode's chang'd——formerly a quarter of an hour would do, but now, you'll keep a Lady two hours, I warrant you.

Sir Toby. That depends entirely on the person.

[Looking at himself.]

I believe I shall do the business in a few minutes.

O.

O. Sprig.

O. Sprig. Well, if you are so expeditious you'll get a great deal of money.

Sir Toby. Oh pardon me! money has not the least weight with me! (no faith, I was never much troubled with the weight of it, [*aside*] the Ladies have eyes——

O. Sprig. Ay, and heads too, as you find to your advantage.

Sir Toby. True, Sir, I have always been happy enough to find their judgment sanction their inclination——

But I am very constant——I never think it honourable to have too many irons in the fire at once.

O. Sprig. There's a touch of his trade, (*aside.*) Well, come, but it's a sign you are so quick, or you couldn't afford to lose all this time——but the Ladies, I know, are impatient.

Sir Toby. Oh, pardon me! I am going this instant——Au revoir (*sings*) “Gad a mercy, the devil's in me,” egad, the whole family are enamoured with my person.

[*Exit.*

D

O. Sprig.

26 THE FAMILY PARTY.

O. Sprig. Lack a day now! that these fellows should get fortunes by disfiguring the heads of people of fashion! but they have learnt the art from the French, who have transferr'd their mode of fighting, to frizzing—always to attack the *weakest* part.

[Exit.]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

Hotel. Table with Wine, &c.

Young Spriggins and Captain Rampart.

Rampart.

WELL, Jack, have not I equipp'd
Pinch in the true style of a London
rider?

T. Sprig. To a nicety—but since he
could get admittance so easy as a hair-
D 2. dresser,

dresser, what end can it answer to send him to my father as Mr. Callico?

Rampart. Why, Pinch found out that old M. Spriggins expects the rider, but has never seen him yet; as this is the first season that Mr. Dennim, the draper, has left off riding for himself.

Y. Sprig. Yes, but to what purpose shall Mr. Pinch—

Rampart. Nay, nay, have we not already contriv'd to get your letter safe to Laura?

Y. Sprig. I acknowledge it.

Rampart. Tho', egad, it required no little finesse to manage THAT; Pinch was obliged to take out your letter, under pretence of trying the heat of his irons that her eye might catch the direction; and afterwards burn off half one of Mrs. Malmsey's side curls, to divert her attention, while Laura slipp'd an answer into his powder bag.

Enter

Enter Sir Toby.

Sir Toby. Hah! faith I am glad to find you so merry, and my spirits are in perfect unison with you.

Rampart. You are come in good time, Sir Toby—We have been drinking success to Belmont, in gaining a mistress he is laying siege to.—Apropos! how have you succeeded in your visit to Laura?

Sir Toby. Egad! now I think on't, Laura told me she knew you.

Y. Sprig. (agitated.) Why surely she did not discover—

Sir Toby. Not the least partiality for you, I promise you; she said she was only acquainted with you thro' her knowledge of Jack Spriggins—and gave me to understand that I had nothing to fear from EITHER of you.

T. Sprig. Ay, how so?

(Rather alarmed.)

Sir Toby. Why, she said she had an EQUAL regard for Mr. Belmont and Jack Spriggins—and that she should as soon think of marrying ONE as the OTHER—and, what's more, she said I had her permission to tell you so.

T. Sprig. Excellent girl!

(aside.)

Sir Toby. But don't let this mortify you! *(affectedly.)* It was only a handsome way of indirectly hinting who was honoured with her affections—hey!

Rampart. A pretty plain hint too.

Sir Toby. Yes, and wasn't lost upon the PERSON for whom it was meant.

T. Sprig. No, indeed, was it not; but, faith, in regard to myself, Sir Toby, I am so indifferent, that I care not, if I saw her in the arms of Jack Spriggins to-morrow.

Sir Toby. Well, 'tis the best way to put a good face on the matter—Poor Belmont!

Belmont ! but I can't believe you have so much *fang froid*, as to wish such a paltry, pitiful fellow as the vulgar dog, you mentioned, should have her, that's being too vindictive.

Rampart. You know the young man then, Sir Toby ?

Sir Toby. Oh, perfectly ! but not in the habit of intimacy, that you'll do me the justice to imagine.

Rampart. But the young man I thought might have been a formidable opponent.

Sir Toby. Oh, no, poor lad ! it wasn't likely he shou'd stand his ground, for, between you and I, he is as great a coward.——

T. Sprig. Zounds, Sir ! (*in a passion correcting himself*) that is, I—I—I—wonder at his ever entering the lists against you.

Rampart. But, Sir Toby, the gentleman you mention is an acquaintance of ours, and, I dare say, will take an opportunity of thanking you in person for your good opinion. -

Sir Toby. Why the young gentleman, as you are gleased to call him, will

will probably have me to thank for every quarterage he gets from that old Hot-tentot his father.——Well, adieu! We have all our engagements——Adieu, Rampart!——Your's, Belmont; but no notice to poor Laura! Wish her in the arms of that horrid dog Spriggins! Oh, you inveterate devil!

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E.

*Old Spriggins at his Lodgings, and
Servant.*

Old Sprig. And, hark'ee me, if Doctor Drench calls again, I'm not at home; when I thought yesterday he was giving me a friendly shake by the hand, adad he was feeling my hand that he might pick my pocket.

Servant.

THE FAMILY PARTY. 33

Servant. Yes, Sir.

Old Sprig. Consulting a physician may be a good regular road to death; but, egad, they take care to make you pay *turnpike* for it; and then this continual clashing of bells is enough to distract—(*Pinch speaks without*) Stay, see who is on the stairs?

[*Exit Servant.*
Some fresh interruption, I dare swear.

Enter Servant.

Mr. Callico, Sir.

Enter Pinch, as Callico, in a long great coat, saddle bags, &c.

Pinch, Sir, your most obedient—
just arrived from town—TRAVEL for
Dennim

Dennim and Co.——shall deposit my saddle bags———slip out of my great coat———and receive the honour of your orders.

Old Sprig. Adad! why you talk like Sir Peter Palaver at a general election. But I was not *advised* that you were to be here so soon.

Pinch. I wonder how the devil you should!

(*aside*)—

The convenience of business has made me alter my circuit.

Old Sprig. Like enough! Why your employment must be very laborious.

Pinch. It does require talents to parry every prejudice, and tickle every temper, for it is not often that we meet with the sagacity of Mr. Spriggins.

Old Sprig. Ha, ha! (*pleased*) But how so?

Pinch. Why, many tradesmen won't give me an order for a yard of tiffany, or a packet of pins, before they know whether I agree with them in party.

Old Sprig. Then you must lose many customers?

Pinch.

Pinch. Not one——my principles on my journey are like a worsted waistcoat piece, will stretch to any thing; and I am often a Whig, Tory, and Republican, in the space of half a street.

Old Sprig. Egad, you imitate some of your betters then; you are as wavering as our Member, Sir Peter Pendulum, who, like a turnstile, by giving way to the strongest, always keeps his place.

Pinch. Now I talk of waistcoat pieces, (*takes out his order-book*) give me leave to set you down for twenty pieces——right Nottingham——take 'em again if not approved. Thank you, Sir, (*sets them down*)——Why, there's your neighbour, Alderman Swilket, came to my inn, gave me a pitiful order for a piece of poplin, and carried away with him my whole profit in punch.——But I have a matter of importance to communicate; you have heard of Alderman Mango the oil-man?

Old Sprig. What, no smash there, I hope; he was reckoned a very good man!

Pinch. Oh, very warm, a plumb and a half at least! his son is now at Bath,
has

36 THE FAMILY PARTY.

has seen your niece at the Rooms, who has no objection to HIM, I believe; and knowing your predilection in favour of trade——

Old Sprig. Well!

Pinch. You shall hear his proposal. Young Mungo has large property independent of his father, and he is aware that Miss Laura can't marry without your consent, and that you are allowed the income of her fortune till she is married, or of age.

Old Sprig. And what then?

Pinch. Suppose he should offer (with the lady's consent too) to take the stuff without the trimming?

Old Sprig. Poh, poh! I don't comprehend you.

Pinch. To take your niece, and give up her fortune; come, you are a sensible man, give it a moment's consideration.

[*Pinch takes his order-book and makes memorandums.*]

Old

Old Sprig. Hem! let me see! Give up her whole fortune——a most tempting!——Ah! but what becomes of my character? The world will be open mouthed——No, no, it won't do.——*Harkee, Mr. Callico, (in a passion)* I have been struck dumb all this time with the impudence of your proposal.

Pinch. Dear Sir, I only——

Old Sprig. How dare you suppose I shall sell my niece?

Pinch. Sir, my commission——

Old Sprig. (in a passion) I, whose credit has ever been as strong as everlasting, and character as white as dimity!

Pinch. Nay, but hear me, let her make a deed of gift of her fortune to young Mr. Spriggins, then you, as his father, will stand clear—the world will suppose it a compromise, a recompense for your son's disappointment.

Old Sprig. Hey, what!——that indeed!

Pinch. And as your son knows nothing of this settlement in his favour, you may make what bargain you please with HIM.

38 THE FAMILY PARTY.

Old Sprig. Ha, ha, ha! that's true,
 —egad, you are a very sensible man
 —Mr. Callico, the hint's not a bad
 one.

Pinch. To cheat his own son (*aside.*)
 Now, Sir, I have in my pocket the set-
 tlement of her fortune on your son, to
 exchange immediately for your con-
 sent for the disposal of her person.

Old Sprig. Well, but why need we
 be so precipitate?

Pinch. Nay, Sir, we must lose no
 time——In this market of marriage, a
 young lady of fortune is snapt up like a
 John a Dory, before you have time to
 ask the price.

Old Sprig. Egad, I believe you're
 right——tho' I have taken a pretty ef-
 fectual precaution to keep off the young
 sparks, by lodging HERE in the VERY
 house of that most indefatigable of all
 duns——old Crossgrain, the taylor.

Pinch. Oh, oh!—ah, you've nick'd
 it.

Old Sprig. Yet, egad, for all that,
 my sister has just found out, that Laura
 received a letter by means of a rascally
 hair-dresser——but I have schem'd it
 ——I shall be too deep for him——

harkee

harkee me, he has appointed to call here immediately, and I have given orders to my people to seize him the very instant he enters the house.

Pinch. Ah! let you alone for management—but there's such tricking, you can't make too much haste, in disposing of your niece.

Old Sprig. Right! for when goods are delivered, as we say, they can't be returned on our hands.

Pinch. That's true!

Old Sprig. And, besides, JACK had a hankering after Laura, and when she is pack'd off, he will have less objection to the widow Wheezy; for bating her being old——

Pinch. Whew! what, does he make *that* an objection?

Old Sprig. And then to be sure she has a little shortness of breath.

Pinch. 'Twill be the sooner stopt.

Old Sprig. Right—and then they pretend to say her teeth are——

Pinch. Like park pales one up t'other down—but Lord what then?

Old Sprig. Come, I'll sign this moment—but harkee—I know nothing of the matter.

Pinch. Not an item.

Old Sprig. And I only do it to serve my son—it won't be thought I trick'd the young man.

Pinch. Quite the reverse, I promise you.

Old Sprig. And Mr. Callico, the youngster won't scruple the legality of the fortune being settled on Jack, hey!

Pinch. Never, I'll engage for it
(*Gets the deed—going.*)

Old Sprig. And, stay—I may depend on't this deed of gift may be a secret from my son.

Pinch. You may be assured, no one shall know it but the gentleman that marries your niece.

[*Exit Old Sprig.*]

The old codger is generally pretty sly, and shaves devilish close—but for once, I believe we shall leave him in the *fuds*.

[*Exit Pinch.*]

SCENE

THE FAMILY PARTY. 41

S C E N E *the last.*

A Room at Old Spriggins's Lodgings.

Sir Toby, solus, (as coming in.)

Completely duped i'faith, to be arrested here by the old taylor, at the instant of success, and that Laura should lodge in the very house of my creditor—and that I should be such a block-head as to be talking to him this morning, and take him for old Spriggins all the while—yes, yes, the hair-dresser that frizzes all the family, can't be wrong in his information to me,—it

E 3 must

must have been Crossgrain himself, I met here this morning, without knowing it — and now I think of it, he seem'd devilishly confus'd, and sneakingly civil, that I might not *fight shy*, till he had taken out the writ — and that ever it should have been ill luck, not to be PERSONALLY known to one's taylor — But here he comes, I must try civility —

Enter Old Spriggins.

Oh, what have I secured you at last, you are aware on what account.

Sir Toby. Yes, yes, I don't want to hear the items — the *account* was, I believe, of pretty long standing.

O. Sprig. It was ; oh, oh ! then if I had not ordered my people to take this measure —

Sir Toby. Faith, I wish your people had never taken this measure of me.

(Half aside.

O. Sprig.

Old Sprig. (with a *sheer*.) I didn't find out this morning, how extensively useful your talents were to the ladies, that you were skilful in a variety of professions.

Sir Toby. Yes, I never spare PROFESSIONS, when one has a point to carry—but, egad, if you have discover'd my design *here* by securing me (as you are pleas'd to call it) you not only oppose my interest, but your own.

Old Sprig. How so? the charges I have against you, are—

Sir Toby. Conscientiously reasonable, no doubt; but if you would but give me credit—

Old Sprig. To not a word you can say, I promise you—I am thoroughly acquainted with the business.

Sir Toby. I don't doubt it, then you know your BUSINESS well enough not to expect always a QUICK RETURN.

Old Sprig. Not if I let you slip, I am sure.

Sir Toby. Nay, then I must tell you, you are deceiv'd; I am absolutely not worth two-pence.

Old Sprig. Who the devil supposed you were, and what then?

Sir Toby. What then? why within this half hour, Miss Spriggins who lodges with you in THIS house, would have been Lady Twaddle.

Old Sprig. Lady Twaddle would she? Oh! oh! that would have been a precious project.

Sir Toby. Immensely so; for the old Hottentot her uncle, I am told, is very rich—do you know him?

Old Sprig. (*hesitating.*) Why—why—not so well as I ought to do perhaps.

Sir Toby. A pitiful paltry plebeian, whose ideas are as narrow as his counter.

Old Sprig. Hey! what! zounds! I can hold no longer.

(*Aside.*

Sir Toby. And then the old Tabby his sister—I HAD cajol'd HER, such a silly piece of antiquated affection! more disgusting than—

Enter

THE FAMILY PARTY. 45

Enter Mrs. Malmsey.

Oh my dear Mrs. Malmsey, I am quite transported——this pleasure is so unexpected.

O: Sprig. I believe so, why what the devil——

Sir Toby. Hush!

Mrs. Malmsey You are the pink of politesse——but I thought you wou'd have been more punctual.——

Sir Toby. I have been detained on unavoidable business.

(Looking significantly on Old Spriggins.)

Old Sprig. Yes; and I shall detain you somewhat longer I fancy.

Mrs.

Mrs. Malmsey. Ah, I don't wonder ; I knew the attractions of Sir Toby Twaddle here.

(Presenting him.)

Old Sprig. This, Sir Toby Twaddle ! no, no, come, come, you are too severe—tho', egad, puppies ARE as much alike, as if they were cut off the same piece.

Mrs. Malmsey. Why, I tell you this is Sir Toby Twaddle.

Old Sprig. Sir Toby ! why zounds you're crazed——this is a barber.

Sir Toby. What ! lookee friend, if you were not beneath my resentment as being a taylor——

Old Sprig. A taylor !

(In a passion.)

Sir Toby. Yes, and should take you by the nose.

O. Sprig. That you never will, for sooner than you should shave me——

Mrs. Malmsey. Shave ! why, Brother, I think it is you that are mad.

Sir Toby. Brother ! is this your Brother, Madam ?

Old Sprig. To be sure it is, Sir.

Sir Toby. Why, what the devil a'n't you a taylor ?

Old

THE FAMILY PARTY. 47

Old Sprig. And what the plague a'nt you a barber?

Sir Toby. Barber, S'dearth, Sir.

Old Sprig. Why, lookee, Sir, if you permit barbers and servants to adopt your DRESS, and fine gentlemen in return, adopt THEIR manners—I only wonder the mistake is not made much oftener.

Enter Jack Spriggins and Laura.

Sir Toby. Oh! now be satisfied who I am; my dear Belmont, you——

Old Sprig. Belmont! why this is my son Jack Spriggins——tho' I don't know tho' how the devil he came here.

Sir Toby. Belmont, young Spriggins! nay, then I'll take my leave.

Y. Sprig. Not till I have first thank'd you for your interest in getting that country cub made an exciseman.

Laura. (to *Sir Toby.*) Nor till I, Sir Toby, have made an apology for my inconstancy, in professing an equal attachment for Mr. Belmont and Jack Spriggins.

Enter

48 THE FAMILY PARTY.

Enter Pinch.

Old Sprig. Oh, Mr. Callico——
what, are you come? Well, is the deed
safe?

Pinch. Indeed it is, Sir, in the
hands of that gentleman.

(Pointing to T. Spriggins.)

Old Sprig. Harkee, Mr. Callico.

Mrs. Malmsey. Callico! why, Bro-
ther, that's the very hair-dresser that
brought the letter to Laura.

Sir Toby (looking through his glass.)
And may I perish, if he is not the iden-
tical scoundrel that told me you were a
taylor.

Old Sprig. And bamboozled me too
——said, you were a barber.

Mrs. Malmsey. Well, since young
Mango is not the man——

Old Sprig. And if you come to that,
since another person has not the finger-
ing of her fortune, we had better make
the best of it.

T. Sprig. Let us, therefore, seek
our happiness within the circle of our
private attachments, since in this place
of folly and dissipation, we have at last
found it in a——*Family Party.*

F I N I S.

